



## ***Montana Fish, Wildlife & Parks***

Region Four Headquarters  
4600 Giant Springs Road  
Great Falls, MT 59405  
June 19, 2008

**SUBJECT: Draft Environmental Assessment for Proposed Acquisition of the Lincoln Ranch on the Marias River**

Attached is the draft Environmental Assessment (EA) regarding Montana Fish, Wildlife & Parks (FWP) proposed acquisition of approximately 7,540 acres in fee title and continued leasing of 1,325 contiguous acres of Bureau of Land Management (BLM) and Department of Natural Resource Conservation (DNRC) lands along the Marias River, known as the Lincoln Ranch.

The property encompasses riparian, sagebrush-grassland and cottonwood gallery forest habitat communities that support an abundance of game and non-game species. The Marias River snakes through the property with numerous oxbows. Aquatic habitat favors native and non-native fish species.

If FWP acquires this property, Montanans and visitors would be provided outstanding opportunities for recreational activities including but not limited to fishing, hunting, river recreation, developed and semi-primitive camping, hiking, cultural and natural history interpretation, wildlife viewing, and other possible compatible uses. The wide range and quality of recreational opportunities in one location is rare and will provide Wildlife, Fisheries and Parks an exceptional opportunity to co-manage natural and recreational resources. This acquisition would also provide public access to adjacent public lands owned by the BLM and DNRC that are currently inaccessible.

The property would be purchased with funds from a variety of sources including the FWP Habitat Montana Program, State Parks Access funds, various non-governmental organizations, and conservation and sportsman groups. All have committed to assist FWP in the purchase and to add this property to public ownership. A final price will not be set until a bid process has been completed.

The EA analyzes the impacts to the human and natural environment from the proposed action and alternatives. We invite you to review the attached EA and provide us with your comments no later than 5:00 p.m. on Monday, July 9, 2008.

Please mail comments to: Lincoln Ranch Acquisition EA, FWP, Region 4 Headquarters, 4600 Giant Springs Road, Great Falls, MT 59405. Comments may also be E-mailed to: [gbertellotti@mt.gov](mailto:gbertellotti@mt.gov).

If you need additional information please contact the undersigned at 406-454-5846, or Mr. Roger Semler, Region 4 Parks Manager, at 406-454-5859.

\_\_\_\_\_/s/  
Gary Bertellotti  
Region Four Supervisor

Attachment: Draft Environmental Assessment